

Dear SIC Members and Supporters:

This issue of *SIC Clips & Quips* (Volume 5, Issue 8) is sent to call attention to information of special interest to School Improvement Councils, their members, and other stakeholders.

Registration Closes Monday, March 18 for the SC-SIC 2013 Annual Meeting – Have you registered yet for the 2013 SC-SIC Annual Meeting? If not, we encourage you to do so today as registration closes on Monday! School Improvement Councils are marking 35 years of service to South Carolina's public schools and communities this year and we want you to be part of the celebration! The 2013 SC-SIC Annual Meeting will be held on **Saturday, March 23**, at St. Andrews Middle School, 1231 Bluefield Road, Columbia. This year's theme is "SICs – 35 Years of Insight, Impact and Innovation," and the day's events will acknowledge the milestone anniversary of our state's SICs with a variety of speakers and sessions of interest to local SIC members and others dedicated to civic engagement in public education. Registrant check-in at 9:00 a.m. and wrap up around 3:45 p.m. A highlight of the conference will be the presentation of SC-SIC's annual Riley Award for School Improvement Council Excellence. Registration fee for the event is just \$30.00, with conference materials, a continental breakfast and buffet lunch provided. Go online to <http://sic.sc.gov>, for additional information, meeting agenda, and the registration form. All registrations must be made and paid for in advance by check, purchase order or major credit card, and should be received by SC-SIC (via mail or fax) **by 5:00 p.m., Monday, March 18**; emailed or scanned registrations cannot be accepted. So make plans to be with us on **Saturday, March 23**, for this year's SC-SIC Annual Meeting in Columbia, as we celebrate 35 years of School Improvement Council insight, impact and innovation in South Carolina's public schools!

State House Update – The South Carolina House of Representatives, on a vote of 116-1, passed an Appropriations Bill (**H.3710**) for FY2013-14 on Wednesday. The budget bill (\$22.7 billion in total funds, including the General Fund, federal and "other" funds, including fees and fines; \$6.2 billion in General Fund dollars alone, mostly from state sales and income taxes) includes an additional \$77 million in non-recurring funds in support of education that will raise the annual base student cost to \$2101 from the current allocation of \$2012 – a welcomed improvement, but still \$670 short of the funding required by the state's Education Finance Act (EFA). Also included in the Appropriations Bill passed by the House is the Center for Educational Partnerships (CEP) within the College of Education at the University of South Carolina. The CEP will roll up all Education Improvement Act (EIA) funds allocated to the programs under its purview (including SC-SIC). The Appropriations Bill now heads to the Senate for consideration by the Senate Finance Committee and the full Senate. Differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill will then be addressed by a conference committee composed of members from both bodies prior to submission to the Governor.

On another bill of note, on Wednesday the Senate Education Committee approved **S.313** which would allow parents to send their children to a public school outside their resident district, subject to school enrollments and capacities. This is similar to a bill passed by the House a few years ago that would provide for school choice within public school districts and a pilot program for open enrollment across district lines. The bill now moves on to the full Senate for consideration.

You are encouraged to visit www.statehouse.gov to learn more about bills in which you may be interested. While there you can visit the "Citizen's Interest" page and sign to receive email alerts about specific bills and committee meetings that you wish to monitor. The SC-SIC staff is always willing to help you learn how to be an active participant in education policy issues. Please contact us if your district would like to schedule advocacy training for School Improvement Council members.

2013 Read-In to be Held April 11 – Hundreds of school children from across South Carolina will gather at the State House on Thursday, April 11 to celebrate reading and libraries at the 2013 SC Read-In. This annual event, sponsored by the SC Association of School Librarians and the SC State Library, lets students show why kids who read succeed. The theme of the event celebrates reading and encourages students to continue reading. All groups and organizations interested in libraries and reading are encouraged to attend. Groups may register online at www.read-in-sc.org. There is no fee to participate, but groups are asked to register so that attendance can be anticipated. The public is invited to attend.

Registration deadline is Monday, March 18th. Students will gather at the State Library at the corner of Bull and Senate streets in Columbia and parade to the State House where they will hear from local authors. For more information, please visit the website listed above or contact Ms. Ann Addy, 2013 SC Read-In Coordinator at (803) 960-4999 or aaddy@solutionsink.com.

Remember, *SIC Clips & Quips* is sent to all SIC members and supporters who share their email addresses with us. Please feel free to print out and share this information with fellow SIC members who may not have received it. We are here to help you, so please contact us any time!

Tom

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"Civic Engagement in Public Education"

